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ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS

Support account for peace-keeping operations

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General, in his report on the support account for peace-keeping operations (A/48/470) proposed the establishment of 127 posts as shown in annex VI to that report, in addition to the 266 posts that had been made available as of 1 August 1993 and as shown in annex III to the report. Of the 266 posts, 72 had been authorized as an interim measure by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). Following its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee, inter alia, recommended to the General Assembly that, of the 199 additional posts (127 plus 72), a total of 148 be authorized for six months covering the period from 1 January to 30 June 1994. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee is summarized in paragraphs 30 and 31 of its report (A/48/757), with details in paragraph 32. The distribution of the 148 posts was as follows: 106 posts for the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (including the Field Operations Division); 3 posts for the Office of Inspections and Investigations and 39 posts for various units in the Department of Administration and Management. The 148 posts covered by the Advisory Committee's recommendations included the 72 posts previously authorized, as mentioned above. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/226 of 23 December 1993 approved 122 additional posts, thereby reducing the number of posts by 26, based on the recommendation by the Fifth Committee. All of the 26 were for the Department of Administration and Management. Of these 26 posts, 24 had previously been authorized by the Advisory Committee in July 1993. The distribution of posts in the Department of Administration and Management is shown in the table below. A similar distribution by Department is shown in the annex to the present report.

	Available 1 August 1993 (1)	Recommended by ACABQ for 1994 (2)	Approved by the General Assembly for 1994 (3)	Difference (3) - (2)
Department of Administration and Management				
Office of the Under-Secretary-General	1	1	1	-
Office of the Security Coordinator	1	1	-	(1)
Peace-keeping Financing Division	28	30	30	-
Accounts Division	12	13	6	(7)
Treasury Division	6	6	5	(1)
Financial Management and Control Division	3	3	3	-
Recruitment and Placement Division	7	9	2	(7)
Staff Administration and Training Division	10	7	6	(1)
Medical and Employee Assistance Division	8	7	4	(3)
Buildings Management Service	3	3	3	-
Purchase and Transportation Service	23	28	22	(6)
Electronic Services Division	4	4	4	-
	106	112 a/	86	(26)

a/ Includes the 39 posts recommended by ACABQ in December 1993 and the 73 posts already approved in May 1993.

2. These reductions came at a time when the central financial, personnel and procurement support services provided by the units in the Department of Administration and Management had increased as a result of the exponential growth in peace-keeping operations. The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management, following the adoption of the recommendation of the Fifth Committee, indicated to the Committee the seriousness of the situation

faced by the affected units. Subsequently, severe difficulties have arisen in the concerned units in the Department of Administration and Management in providing adequate support services for peace-keeping operations. It should be noted that the direct correlation between the amount of extra work and the establishment of new missions or expansion of existing missions should be properly recognized. Moreover, the detailed work involved in supporting peace-keeping operations should be fully taken into consideration. Accordingly, this report is submitted on an emergency basis to bring to the attention of the General Assembly the severe difficulties that have arisen following the adoption of resolution 48/226.

3. The workload increase described in the report of the Secretary-General on the support account relates to the contribution that the Departments and Offices other than the Department for Peace-keeping Operations, collectively, make to peace-keeping operations. Without this contribution, the effective functioning of peace-keeping operations would be compromised, if not rendered altogether unworkable. This contribution is also essential to ensure that the Organization's financial and staff regulations and rules are properly and consistently applied and that the proper checks and balances are maintained. The serious impact of these post reductions on the ability of the Secretariat to provide the required support services to peace-keeping operations and on the functioning of the peace-keeping operations themselves cannot be overemphasized. To illustrate, some of the difficulties encountered are given below:

(a) Accounts Division:

(i) The Accounts Division is responsible for processing all financial transactions relating to peace-keeping and other field missions. These include effecting payments to suppliers and Governments, payrolling of all international staff in peace-keeping and other missions, maintaining accounts and reporting on them to the General Assembly. The extent of this work has grown enormously in recent years. The discontinuation of two P-4, one P-3 and three General Service posts has seriously affected the work in the areas discussed below;

(ii) The payroll has grown to 15,000 staff. The growth includes international civilian staff of peace-keeping missions who are payrolled from Headquarters. This particularly involves the accounting actions transferring staff members to and from the accounts of peace-keeping missions. The discontinuation of one P-4 and two General Service posts has seriously strained the control environment in the Payroll Section and will inevitably lead to processing backlogs. These, in turn, may jeopardize the accuracy of accounts, as well as cause inconvenience for staff members;

(iii) The increase in the number of peace-keeping missions increases the level of support that the Operational Accounts Section must provide in accounting, cash remittances, bank reconciliations and financial reporting. The discontinuance of two Professional and one General Service posts has removed the capacity to respond to the needs of peace-keeping missions. Since the overall responsibility remains and

the workload continues undiminished, the loss of the aforementioned posts has been operationally damaging to the work and to the timely preparation of financial statements and reports of peace-keeping operations;

(b) Treasury Division:

(i) As a result of expanded peace-keeping operations, treasury activity has grown significantly given the number of peace-keeping missions, the number of Member States and the number of separate assessments and payments made in the course of a year. The discontinuation of a General Service post has made it difficult to cope with the increase in the number of assessment letters and receipts activity, as well as to comply with the financial rules and policies that require receipts to be deposited promptly in the bank and proper accounting to be done;

(c) Office of Human Resources Management:

(i) The Recruitment and Placement Division managed to cope with the increase in workload generated by the expansion of peace-keeping operations because of the additional five posts (two P-4 and 3 General Service) authorized by the Advisory Committee in July 1993. Two additional General Service posts were also recommended by the Advisory Committee for 1994;

(ii) In 1993, the Division continued to provide an ever-increasing number of Professional and General Service staff members for peace-keeping missions. This increase in the staffing needs of peace-keeping missions, which has been enormous compared to previous years, has resulted in a commensurate increase in workload for the Division. In order to provide the required staffing, the Division must screen, evaluate and interview thousands of candidates identified from the computerized mission roster (with 7,000 entries) and other sources. It must also prepare hundreds of cables, letters, memoranda and interview reports as well as presentations to the Selection Committee. All this work must be done within tight time-limits. As political developments occur in the missions, additional staffing in the geographical sector or areas of specialization concerned (such as humanitarian, logistics, etc.) must be provided without delay;

(iii) The discontinuance of the five posts previously authorized by the Advisory Committee has impaired the Division's ability to respond to the staffing requirements of peace-keeping missions efficiently and on time;

(iv) In the Staff Administration and Training Division one P-4, one P-3 and two General Service posts were discontinued. Consequently, the ability of the Staff Administration and Monitoring Service to handle the vast increase in the workload resulting from the increase in the number of peace-keeping missions now being undertaken by the Organization has been impaired. Given the already heavy workload, the additional work relating to the assignment of staff to missions and

additional work relating to the assignment of staff to missions and their subsequent reabsorption cannot be absorbed by the Service at its reduced staffing level. To illustrate the volume of work on behalf of missions alone, the Service has to issue the following in a period of one to two months: 800 personnel actions, 252 separations actions, 300 letters of appointment and 512 summaries of performance evaluation reports. The need for the reinstatement of the one P-4 and two General Service posts mentioned above in order to cope with the large increase in mission-related work is amply demonstrated here;

(v) In the Staff Rules and Personnel Manual Section, one P-3 post was discontinued. The Section has also experienced a great increase in its workload as a result of the large number of peace-keeping missions it must advise on the administrative law of the United Nations. There has been a significant increase in requests to the Section from the missions on the application and interpretation of Staff Regulations and Rules. As a result of the large increase in peace-keeping operations, a thorough and careful analysis of the conditions of service of the international civil service has become essential. The Section has become a focal point for legal matters concerning the field, including, for example, the interpretation of the 300-series of the Staff Rules. Direct consultations with and requests for advice from the field average from 120 to 180 a year, taking up a large amount of staff time. It is envisaged that the legal support functions will not decrease in the near future and would require at least the reinstatement of the discontinued P-3 post. This will enable the Section to answer, adequately, the needs and requests of the peace-keeping missions. The issues of delegation of authority to missions for the handling of claims and disciplinary procedures in the field missions would also be handled by this P-3 staff member. The deletion of the post would necessitate the cancellation of basic activities relating to setting policies and controls;

(vi) In the Medical and Employee Assistance Division one P-3 and three General Service posts, which had been authorized by the Advisory Committee in July 1993, were discontinued. The ability of the Division to process medical clearances and examinations and to render medical/administrative services to newly recruited staff members, military observers and civilian police assigned to these peace-keeping missions in a timely manner has been seriously affected. Delays are becoming unavoidable that could seriously undermine the Secretary-General's efforts directed at reducing the delay in the mounting of new operations and the efficient flow of personnel for the staffing of the ongoing missions;

(d) <u>Purchase and Transportation Service</u>:

(i) The discontinuation of the three General Service posts, which had previously been authorized by the Advisory Committee has affected procurement functions causing delays in: the preparation of abstracts of bids; the preparation of requests for quotations, bids and proposals; the maintenance of vendor databases; the review of invoices

and expediting activities with vendors; and the preparation of proposals to the Committee on Contracts;

(e) Office of the Security Coordinator:

(i) The Office of the Security Coordinator, on behalf of the Secretary-General, is responsible for the coordination of all activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies relating to the safety and security of staff at all field locations. It is staffed by two Professional (one P-5 and one P-3) and two General Service staff members whose posts are funded on a cost-shared basis by the organizations of the United Nations system. This structure was established before the proliferation of United Nations peace-keeping operations and, therefore, the cost-sharing arrangements exclude the staff assigned to such operations. The staffing structure reflects the minimum number required to carry out the duties related to staff of the United Nations agencies and those United Nations personnel serving at projects in the field. The present level of staffing does not enable the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator to respond to the urgent security requirements at peace-keeping missions;

(ii) The Advisory Committee's authorization for the establishment of a P-4 post for a security specialist in July 1993 allowed the Office to commence the exercise of its responsibility for security management for United Nations civilians assigned to peace-keeping missions, including the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) and matters relating to Mozambique, Liberia, Angola, Georgia and Rwanda;

(iii) As a result of the dramatic increase in the number of security incidents, urgent action is required to ensure that a security specialist be provided for peace-keeping operations. Given the growing number of casualties and increasing number of complaints from Governments and staff, it has become extremely difficult to address the security concerns of mission personnel effectively.

Conclusion

4. In the light of the impact of resolution 48/226, the Secretary-General is of the view that it is necessary to redress urgently the serious difficulties that have arisen relating to the reductions set out in paragraph 2 above. Therefore, the Secretary-General requests the Fifth Committee to review urgently its earlier decision with a view to endorsing fully the recommendation of the Advisory Committee contained in paragraphs 31 and 32 of its report (A/48/757). The cost of the reinstatement of these posts will be met within the amount already approved in paragraph 2 of resolution 48/226 for the period January to June 1994.

5. The report requested in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 48/226 is under preparation and will be made available as soon as possible, together with appropriate proposals of the Secretary-General for the requirements for the remainder of 1994.

ANNEX

Distribution of posts by departments/offices

	Available 1 August 1993 (1)	Recommended by ACABQ for 1994 (2)	Approved by General Assembly for 1994 (3)	Difference (3) - (2)
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions	1	1	1	-
Executive Office of the Secretary-General	4	4	4	-
Department of Peace-keeping Operations	143	213	213	-
Office of Legal Affairs	2	2	2	-
Department of Administration and Management	106	112	86	(26)
Office of Inspections and Investigations	9	10	10	-
Department of Public Information	1	-	-	-
	266	342	316	(26)